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variety of forms, now gay and lively, now caustic and severe, now bursting out in multitudinous ringing laughter.

In person he is anything but prepossessing; being diminutive in stature and awkward in his movements, with a shrivelled, yellow, parchment skin. His head, however, is superb, and his face remarkably sensitive and expressive; the eyes sunken, but brilliant with the fire of genius and the illuminations of opium. In manners he is a model of decorum, urbanity, and natural, unaffected gentility. He is a magnificent talker, and a fine reader, — which last quality he notes as a rare accomplishment, whether among men or women. He is genial and hospitable in his household. He performs set tasks of walking, day by day, in his garden, and marks his progress by deposits of stones. He has offered his body, after death, to the surgeons, for dissection, as his contribution to physiological science. He seriously believes that the dreadful gnawing of the stomach already alluded to, which arises perhaps from the collapse and impotency of that organ through the use of opium, is caused by the ravages of a living animal. He is singular in his habits, often disappears from his home for days together, — no inquiry being made after him by his friends, — and returns as mysteriously as he went. He has two daughters, one of whom is married to an officer in the Indian army; the other and eldest presides over the house, and acts as his amanuensis.

ART. V.—1. *Abelard*. Par CHARLES DE RÉMUSAT. Vols. I., II. Paris: Librairie Philosophique de Ladrangé. 1845. 8vo. pp. 509, 563.

2. *Die Kirche Christi und ihre Zeugen oder die Kirchengeschichte in Biographien*, durch FRIEDRICH BÖHRINGER. 2^{ter} Band, 2^{te} Abtheilung. Zurich: Verlag von Meyer und Zeller. 1854. 8vo. pp. 662.

THE second of the above-named works may be dismissed with the general remark, that the volume is in every respect worthy of the series to which it belongs. Beside the biogra-

phy of Abelard and Heloise, it contains Lives of St. Francis, Pope Innocent III., and that singular saint, Elizabeth of Hungary. The style and the method of Böhringer cannot be too highly commended, and his candor is so impartial, that we have not yet found from his works to what church he belongs, or what are his religious opinions.

His account of the French philosopher, however, is only a condensed translation of the great work of Rémusat, from which all his facts and most of his opinions are drawn. The source is excellent. When a writer like Rémusat gives the results of a biographical study, there will be little left of value for any new explorer in the field. To minuteness of research, to breadth of view, to a masterly power of grouping facts and conceiving scenes, he joins a diction at once masculine and musical. No writer handles more easily, more lovingly, or more intelligently the hard subtilties of the scholastic philosophy. No man can more delight in threading the mazes of mediæval disputes, and reducing to shape and comeliness their tangled web. It is Charles de Rémusat who has best made known to France the convent life and political disputes of England in the eleventh century, the scholastic life of the Continent in the twelfth century, and the later philosophies of Germany, from Kant to Hegel; while another of the name, Abel de Rémusat, has gathered up the fragments of Indian philosophy. Among French *savans* the name of Rémusat deserves honor equal to that of St. Hilaire, and second only to that of Cousin.

We shall not attempt to indicate the manifold and differing authorities which M. Rémusat was compelled, in preparing his work, to examine, understand, compare, and harmonize. No subject of biography has been written about more frequently, more learnedly, more obscurely, and more absurdly. Folios, quartos, octavos, duodecimos, and diamond pocket editions, in bad Latin, indifferent French, antiquated English, and, worst of all, genuine philosophic German, warned the enthusiast to pause at the threshold of his task. The treasures of the Parisian libraries terrify, while they aid; and stout nerves are needed to undertake a work of which the materials are so complex and redundant. To separate myth from fact in

the biography was not easy ; but this was a light and pleasant task compared with that of reducing to system the philosophy, the theology, and the ethics of the great scholastic teacher. The second task has, nevertheless, been as successfully accomplished as the first.

M. Rémusat divides his work into three books. The first treats of the life of Abelard, and tells all that is certainly known concerning him, his fortunes, his controversies, his labors, and his love. The second, in ten chapters, treats of his philosophy, dialectics, psychology, and metaphysics. The first of these chapters is a remarkable summary of the history of scholasticism previously to the twelfth century, and the second is an equally remarkable statement of the great scholastic question as Abelard found it. The influence of Aristotle is ingeniously traced, and the reasons for the triumph of nominalism are fully set forth. The third division of the work, which is the longest, ablest, and most striking in the display of copious erudition, treats of the doctrine of Abelard in theology and morals, with a criticism of some of his miscellaneous writings. To give even a synopsis of the scientific part of M. Rémusat's work would require more space than we have at command. We prefer to spare our readers, and to confine ourselves to the more entertaining portion contained in the first book. It were presumptuous for any but a skilled metaphysician to criticise or mutilate what must be fully read to be well comprehended.

In the cemetery of Paris, which bears the name of Père la Chaise, at the right of the small gate on the Rue St. André, and close to the narrow strip of earth where the graves of Jews are crowded together, is the monument which every visitor first seeks and longest remembers, — that of Heloise and Abelard. The dingy, florid canopy, pinnaced and crocketed, which covers it, is not in the purest style of Gothic art, nor have the recumbent statues, however faithful in their likeness, the merit of remarkable beauty. The interest of the monument lies in the romantic story which it symbolizes, and the evident popular reverence of which it is the centre. At almost any hour of the day, some man or woman of the people may be found waiting and gazing there. The work-

man spares a few sous to hang on the railing his votive wreath, the offering of his holiday, and the flower-girl saves from her stock a handful of roses to drop upon this tomb. The rough artisans of the Faubourg St. Antoine love to come hither; and, if they cannot explain the rude Greek inscription,* or see in this pair of figures the eternal marriage of philosophy and religion, they can discover a charm which tames them into courtesy. There are in the cemetery of Père la Chaise numberless famous monuments, of generals, statesmen, poets, orators, and men of letters, but none for which the people seem to care as for this. If honors at his tomb can make a man a hero, Abelard in his own land will come next to Charlemagne and Napoleon. Even the excesses of the first Revolution, which tore up and scattered the sacred relics of kings, and profaned the vaults of St. Denis, spared the bones of the philosopher and scholar.

The popular association of the name of Abelard is with that of Heloise. When one of these is mentioned, the other is instantly suggested. But, historically, Abelard's name has other and larger associations, — with that of Roscelin in the first grand protest of reason against authority, the inauguration and prophecy of the triumph of science, — with that of Bernard, in the battle of knowledge with creed, of ideas with formulas, of the soul against the Church, — with that of Arnold of Brescia in suffering for opinion's sake. His correspondence with a nun, which was in his own day the scandal of his life, now makes his chief renown; but his truest record is in the reforms of these later centuries, of which he was the pioneer. With Abelard modern rationalism practically began. He first, in the darkness of the Middle Age, spoke the word of promise for the days to come, proved that all wisdom was not in the cloister, that inquiry had rights which monkery might not silence, and ventured to criticise established methods of thought and teaching. In modern civilization the life of Abelard is one of the earliest and most important factors, marking the first successes of mind in breaking away from the trammels of ecclesiastical teaching.

* ΑΕΙ ΣΥΜΠΡΗΛΑΕΓΜΕΝΟΙ. "For ever united."

We cannot read it with the same feeling with which we read the lives of Catholic saints, or those of great men who were workers chiefly inward for their own time. It is to be interpreted by the progress of thought and discovery in Europe, not merely in the schools of French philosophy, but in all the great movements for reform in Germany, Holland, and England. His proper companions are not so much Descartes, Voltaire, and D'Alembert, as Pascal, Grotius, Erasmus, Bacon, and Wickliffe.

Abelard was born at a time when the power of the Catholic Church seemed to have reached its height, and assumed its definite proportions. The capture of Jerusalem by the Turks had put an end to all Christian possession there, the schism of the Greek Church had become irrevocably fixed, and the successor of St. Peter had exacted from all the monarchs of Western Europe the confession of his independent rights. Scarcely a year had passed since Henry of Germany had waited with bare feet at the door of Gregory's palace, and had stooped to meaner humiliation than the legendary submission of Theodosius before Ambrose. William of Normandy, as a faithful vassal of the Pope, had just conquered England from its rebellious Saxon kings. Philip of France was loyal, and agreed to all that Hildebrand would claim. The tribute of "Peter's pence," which King Ina of Wessex had some centuries before invented, had now become an institution; and to fail in its payment was to fail in religious duty and to risk terrible punishment. The new College of Cardinals was the body-guard and the instrument of Roman sovereignty, and the monastic institutions, set on the finest sites of every land, were so many fortresses defending Catholic unity. To question the least practice of the Roman ritual, or the boldest form of Roman dogma, to allegorize or spiritualize any portion of the creed or worship, was a crime to be watched, to be denounced, to be punished. In the year 1078 the heretic Berenger, who for more than thirty years had fought against the literal doctrine of transubstantiation, solemnly at Rome renounced his falsehood, and testified upon oath, that the bread and wine, when the priest had sanctified them by his prayer, became the actual body and blood of

Christ. When Abelard was born, all teaching and all influence were in the hands of the Church.

Abelard was of noble parentage. His father, Count Berenger, inherited a spacious domain in the region of the Loire, and was owner of a conspicuous castle in what is now the small village of Pallet, about fifteen miles southeast of Nantes. In this castle (the site of which is still marked by an old stone cross), in the year 1079, his eldest son, Peter, first saw the light. Though destined from birth to the profession of arms, the child was not deprived of anything that could make an accomplished scholar and gentleman. His father was, for that age, a cultivated man,—unusually so for an inhabitant of the rude and brutal province of Brittany.* But it soon became evident that the small supply of knowledge which the neighborhood, with its scanty manuscript treasures and its indifferent teachers, could furnish, would not satisfy the marvellous capacity and the boundless desire of the growing boy. Relinquishing speedily the thought of a military life, he set himself to be a knight-errant of philosophy, and travelled over the whole region, seeking scholastic adventures, disputing by the wayside, holding controversy with learned wranglers, and venturing upon all questions, however grave, subtle, or mystical. He went to the schools of the dialectic masters only to hear, to vanquish, and to forsake them. How far his travels extended, it is impossible to tell, or in what part of France it was that he first met with the condemned heretic Roscelin, the champion of the Nominalists. Certain it is, that before the age of twenty he had heard this renowned master, had refuted his arguments, and had adopted many of his views. As yet, his education had been provincial. He had not ventured to the capital, and had only in his wanderings drilled his wit and his speech for the keener encounters of logic in the famous school of Nôtre Dame.

The rector of this school at that time—the close of the eleventh century—was the Archdeacon William of Champeaux, called, from his towering ability as a dialectician, the “Column of the Teachers.” The fame of his instruction had

* “Brito dictus est quasi brutus.”

made Paris to the rest of Europe what Athens was to Rome in the age of Augustus. Students from Italy, Germany, and England flocked to the cloisters of the island in the Seine, and went back with large report of the wit and wisdom in those halls of logic. The master was gracious to his pupils, and honored those who were quick and intelligent with special notice and favor;—though it was observed that his favor was not very lasting. No pupil was more prepossessing than was Peter Berenger, then in the flower of his youth, comely in countenance, eloquent in address, instant in apprehension, of surprising memory, and of a wisdom strangely precocious. He might long have remained the favorite, had he been content to listen, and not dared to dispute. But Peter was never a docile pupil;—the weapons of argument against which fellow-pupils could bring no match were speedily turned upon the teacher himself, and the favor of the Archdeacon was changed to indignation. The evident and perfect victory, however, was not at once on the side of the young upstart. He was an adept in the ways of the *Trivium*, but in the *Quadrivium** he was as yet untaught; and ignorance of these branches exposed him often to mortification. For a while he endeavored by a course of private lessons with an obscure teacher to make up for this lack; but his mind was already too full, and his tastes were too far decided; and the chief result of his lessons in the *Quadrivium*, which he vainly endeavored to conceal, was the surname by which he was ever after known.†

Abelard could not long remain in the position of a learner. Two years have hardly passed before we find him at the head of a rival school at Melun, a royal residence, some five and twenty miles from Paris; and not much later, at Corbeil, still

* The scientific division of the Middle Age separated studies into the *Trivium*, comprehending rhetoric, grammar, and dialectics, and the *Quadrivium*, comprehending arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

† The popular notion of Abelard's surname derives it from the French word *abeille*, the application of which to him seemed as fit as the application of the same epithet to the great Athenian. Its true origin was in the jest of his teacher, who told him one day, to cheer his despondency, that a great scholar like himself, like a full dog, could do nothing but *bajare lardum*, "lick up the fat," which was taken up as a nickname by his fellow-students, and corrupted finally into "Abelardus."

farther down the Seine, and within comfortable walking-distance of the episcopal house at Nôtre Dame. Party jealousies among the students of Paris aided his success. The Archdeacon began to tremble at the rising fame of this brilliant and intrepid rival, and was relieved only by learning that the physical powers of the young teacher were not equal to his excessive labors, and that ill-health had forced him to suspend hostilities.

After a few years spent in various study and travel, Abelard came back to Paris and enrolled himself once more with the students of his former master, who now enlivened the solitude of a monastic life by classes in rhetoric and philosophy. The pupil was no longer a presumptuous youth, but a man of mature years, noted, skilful, and formidable, to whom even a prelate of the Church might fitly defer. A discussion soon arose upon the question of Nominalism and Realism, which the condemnation of Roscelin had made the great question of science. William of Champeaux was a Realist, thorough and zealous. He maintained most sturdily that ideas are essences; that names are things; that man is as much a reality as individual men are realities; that *universals* as truly as particulars are positive existences. He believed that there are no such things as abstract conceptions. The essence of the whole enters into every part. The ideal sheep or horse is to be found in every individual of the species, yet has an independent life of its own. This view, Abelard as a Nominalist delighted to refute and to ridicule. "If the race," said he, "is the essence of the individual, if *man* is an essence entire in every man, and individuality is only an accident, it follows that this essence is at the same time *entire in every man at once*; that when Plato is at Rome, and Socrates at Athens, it is all with Plato at Rome, and all at Athens with Socrates. In like manner, the *universal* man, being the essence of the individual, is the individual himself, and carries with him everywhere the individual; so that when Plato is at Rome, Socrates is there also, and when Socrates is at Athens, Plato is with him and in him." Reasoning like this soon silenced the Realist, and destroyed his influence with his pupils. To be vanquished in this argument was to lose the prestige of dialectic skill. The

humiliation of William was complete, when he saw his rival established as a teacher in the very city of Paris, on the Mount St. Geneviève, in the very cloisters of the patron saint of the city, looking down from this height upon the inferior school of Nôtre Dame on the island, and defying his impotent threats and slanders.

The position of Abelard in this new school was splendid enough to satisfy even his boundless ambition. The idol of a crowd of pupils who thronged to his lessons from every part of the land, — the wonder of those who had exhausted the wisdom of other teachers, — invincible in argument, invulnerable to the attacks of the most cunning sophists, day by day he rose in fame, in pride, and in consciousness of power. One by one, his enemies ceased to make their cavils heard. William of Champeaux went off to bury his shame in the cares of a distant bishopric. If filial duty called Abelard away for a season, to dismiss his parents to the convent life, which they had both embraced, he could find on his return that no one remained to dispute his supremacy. In the year 1113,* at the age of thirty-four, he was acknowledged the intellectual ruler of Paris, and virtually of Europe, — the highest authority in all the popular branches of human science, a “dictator in the republic of letters.”

The praise which his contemporaries lavished upon his universal knowledge was not quite deserved. Though he had read extensively in ancient authors, and knew something of almost every subject, he did not “know all which any one could know,” as his epitaph reads.† For the science of mathematics he had no fancy or aptitude, and was never quick at figures. Of law, he had but limited knowledge; for in his time it was not much studied. The great school of Bologna did not exist. He was master of no ancient tongue but the Latin; the Greek, of which there were at this time but few students, was known to him only by a few philosophical terms, and all its authors he read in translations; while in Hebrew he had

* In the same year, the young monk Bernard was planting at Clairvaux his famous convent.

† “Ille sciens quicquid fuit ulli scibile. Non homini, sed scientiæ deest quod nescivit.”

no instruction. Yet his philosophical knowledge seems to justify the most extravagant praise. It comprehended all writers, from the pupils of Socrates down to the latest of the Church Fathers. His brilliant teaching showed as much the fruits of extensive study as the keenness of a sharp logical insight. Citations from classic and Christian authors, from Cicero and Priscian, from Porphyry and St. Augustine, lent grace and strength to his clear propositions. Nor were playful witticisms excluded. In his frequent literary digressions, which relieved the dryness of abstract reasoning, he did not disdain to own the charm of heathen poetry. The verses of Virgil and Horace, Ovid and Lucan, were woven like golden threads into his ingenious pleadings, and he even quoted passages from them as "authority."

Philosophy was the department of teaching for which Abelard had the most remarkable genius, and in this he is claimed as the inventor of the theory of *Conceptualism*,* which is a sort of compromise between the Nominalists and the Realists, an application of the idealism of Plato to the dialectics of Aristotle. Abelard eulogized the Academic philosopher, while he closely followed the Stagirite. All the Church Fathers borrowed Aristotle's method, but Abelard was his chief interpreter to the mind of Europe.

As yet, Abelard had not ventured upon the ground of theology, the province of monks and priests, to whose life he had no inclination. It remained the only field in which he had not conquered. At this time the leading teacher in theology in France was Anselm of Laon, a namesake and a former pupil of the great Archbishop of Canterbury. For a while, he had taught in Paris, but for some years had lived in retirement at Laon, where the magnificent Cathedral still keeps his memory as one of the fathers of Gothic architecture. Crowds of students came from all parts of Europe to hear his commentaries on the Scriptures, and to be charmed by his seductive eloquence. Among the rest Abelard resorted to him, but

* The formula of this theory is "that universal ideas are the expression of conceptions founded on real facts." It is singular that this word *conceptualism* was used in histories of philosophy which were written before the manuscript fragments of Abelard which explain the system had been brought to light.

soon discovered that his showy rhetoric had no depth or force. "Fine foliage in the distance, but near at hand nothing but a barren fig-tree. When he kindled his fire, he made smoke enough, but brought out no light."

"I could not long," says Abelard, "waste my time in the shadow of such a man." And very soon he made it known that he stood ready, without a teacher, to expound passages of Scripture harder than any that Anslem attempted. The incredulous scorn which greeted his proposals was changed to admiring enthusiasm at his signal success. In a single night, he had mastered the profoundest secrets of Ezekiel's prophecy, and had proved that insight, rather than theologic lore, is needed to understand the Divine Word. His notes were recorded as they fell from his lips. The students of Anslem transferred their attachment from the old priest to the young philosopher, and Pompey could only rail with desperate wrath against the Cæsar who had spoiled him of his honors. When Abelard returned to Paris, he carried with him a theological fame which before him only years of cloistral study had been able to earn, and seemed to have compassed the circle of the sciences. He came back the recognized head of all the schools of Paris, fit to teach in any, — to receive, though not a priest, the office of "canon" of the city.*

M. Rémusat gives a glowing description of the Cité of Paris at this culminating period of Abelard's glory. The island in the Seine was at that time the centre of religion, justice, authority, and letters to all the city. Around the cathedral were fifteen churches, besides convents, palaces, and royal gardens, crowding all the narrow space with sacred and splendid associations.

"There, under the shadow of those churches and the cathedral, in solemn cloisters, in vast halls, or on the turf of the court-yards, walked to and fro the sacred band, who seemed to live only for science and faith, yet were animated equally by the love of argument and of influence. Along with these priests, and under their sometimes jealous, but often impotent oversight, went the turbulent crowd of students of

* Some writers deny that he was made canon of Paris thus early. Others insist that he was canon of Sens and not of Paris.

all ranks, of all callings, of all races, of all countries, whom, for studies sacred or profane, the European renown of the school of Paris had called together. In this school, and in the midst of this attentive and obedient nation, was often to be seen a man of broad forehead, quick, proud glance, and noble bearing, whose beauty still kept the bloom of youth, while it bore the darker hues and the more decided lines of mature manhood. His sober yet carefully ordered costume, the severe elegance of his whole exterior, the simple dignity of his address, by turns affable and lofty, an imposing and graceful manner, marked by that indolent ease which follows the confidence of success and the habit of command, the deference of his attendants, haughty to all except to him, the curious eagerness of the crowd, who made way as he walked along to his lessons or returned to his dwelling, followed by disciples still excited by his eloquence, — all gave sign of a master, most mighty in the school, most famous in the world, most popular in the Cité. Everywhere they talked of him. From the remotest regions, from Brittany, from England, from the lands of the Suevi and the Teutons, they flocked to hear him. Even Rome sent scholars to him. The throngs of the street, anxious to look at him, stopped while he passed; the people in their houses came down to the threshold of the doorway, and women drew back the curtain from the little panes of their narrow window. Paris had adopted him as her child, her ornament, and her light; and now made universal boast of that name, which, after seven centuries, the city which has boasted so much, and forgotten so much, still keeps in her public remembrance.” — Vol. I. p. 43.

It was indeed a proud eminence to occupy; the prouder, from the reflection that all this greatness he himself had achieved. He had no one on earth to envy. Riches flowed in upon him from the five thousand students, whom it is not probable that he taught gratuitously.* He looked around, and there was no one in the world but himself who seemed worthy the name of “philosopher.”† He had no fear of foes, whether in the halls of knowledge or in the conclaves of the Church. He seemed to have reached a place so high, so strong, so inaccessible to other men, that nothing but his own will could overthrow him. But there was one fatal force with which he had not yet been called to strive. The

* This seemingly fabulous number of Abelard's pupils is attested by numerous and trustworthy witnesses, foes not less than friends.

† “Cum jam me solum in mundo superesse philosophum æstimarem.” — Epist. I.

passion which Bernard was in youth so careful to extinguish, conquered the great teacher in the maturity of his years. When Abelard stooped to love, he ceased to rule.

That the life of Abelard, up to the period of his acquaintance with Heloise, had been that of an ascetic, it is not safe to affirm. For the irregular pleasures of worldly scholars he had always professed a proud disdain; yet there is reason to suppose, from a friend's letter to him still extant, that in his dealings with the other sex he had not been a model of austere purity.* No scandal, however, had attached to his name. Although he was a canon of the Church, he had not received priest's orders, and some degree of license might have been overlooked, and pardoned. But now he was to appear in a new character, which at once mortified, saddened, and alarmed the friends who idolized him.

In a house on the northeast corner of the isle of the Cité, portions of which are still remaining, lived at this time an old canon, Fulbert by name, whose chief pride and joy was the beautiful niece who dwelt with him, and whose education he had cared for so far, that she had become a prodigy of learning in the sciences and the tongues, "famous through all the kingdom." To the honor of her noble birth were added the charms of a graceful form and a sweet disposition. Large deduction may be made from Abelard's encomiums, and yet enough will be left to prove the rare fascination of one who could captivate the master of sciences. Her youth (for at the time when Abelard's acquaintance with her began she was not more than fifteen or sixteen years of age) only increased the marvel of her accomplishments. Abelard resolved to win to himself such a prize. The way was not difficult; for the vanity of Fulbert grasped eagerly at the privilege of such instruction for his favorite, and the philosopher found a home in the old canon's house, with the liberty of unrestricted association and unreserved authority, as regarded his lovely pupil. There was no suspicion, and no watch of their movements.

* A couplet in one of his poems runs:

"Gratior est humilis meretrix quam casta superba,
Perturbatque domum sæpius ista suum."

The consequence was natural and inevitable. Their studies were shared, they read together, they sang together, their hearts met with their eyes, and soon all bounds of love were passed, and duty and honor were lost in the delirium of passion. There was no attempt on the part of Abelard to conceal his sentiment. His lessons in the school grew careless, his expositions were tame and mechanical, and love-songs were the productions which amazed his scholars. He became "the first of the Trouvères." After a while, reports created suspicions, and the lovers were parted. But they continued to hold stolen interviews, and felt it a kind of duty to maintain their thwarted passion.

We need not dwell upon the subsequent steps of the catastrophe;—how Heloise, carried off to the early home of her lover, there became mother of his son; how she argued and expostulated to prevent the marriage which remorse and affection made him urge, but which she knew would blight his prospects and defeat his ambition; how reluctantly she consented to the "sacrifice" which restored her own honor, and sought to keep secret in the seclusion of a convent that which another woman would have hastened to make public; how the jealous Fulbert at last found opportunity for satisfying his vengeance; the shame and doubt and despair which overwhelmed Abelard; the solemn grief of Heloise, as she took, in the convent of Argenteuil (the place of her early education), the black habit of a nun, pronouncing that plaint with which, in the *Pharsalia*, Cornelia greets Pompey on his return from *Pharsalia*.* These rapid changes are as a short and troubled dream, from which one awakes to terrible reality. This brief year of passion divides the life of Abelard. The years before were mainly years of triumph and hope, of rising fame and growing ambition. The years that follow are mainly years of trial and pain, in which victories only flash out from the prevailing darkness. Before was the steady summer effulgence;

* "O maxime conjux,

O thalamis indigne meis, hoc juris habebat

In tantum Fortuna caput! Cur impia nupsi,

Si miserum factura fui? Nunc accipe poenas,

Sed quas sponte luam."

now is the lowering autumn, when the brightest days are clouded and sad. When Abelard ceased to love, the climax of his life was passed.

The place of retreat which Abelard chose was the great abbey of St. Denis, the most important convent in the kingdom. Here, when the first flush of shame and the first deep broodings of vengeance were gone, he hoped to give himself to the silence and meditation of a true monastic life. But his own nature was too restless for such a seclusion. Scandalized by the profane excesses of the holy abbot and his brethren, he complained so boldly, that those who had received him as a guest of honor in their house now found him a nuisance whose presence burdened their hospitality. To the pressing instances of his former disciples was soon added the disinterested urgency of his convent friends, who thought it shameful that so much learning and ability should be wasted in the exercises of the cloister. After a year at St. Denis, we find him again at the head of a school, in the priory of Maisoncelle, in Champagne, with a crowd of students around him hardly less than in his day of glory. Paris came out to listen to him in his solitude. The other schools began at once to decline, and the poor monk could know, that, though the world had heard of his disgrace, it had not forgotten his genius. His new teachings were more in theology than in dialectics, his reasonings gathered themselves around the substance of religious doctrine, and men could say, with emphasis, that the Church had again its Origen.

The new position was a dangerous one; and the moral power of Abelard to sustain himself was not what it had formerly been. He was no longer a master, who could despise his enemies, but a simple private teacher, whose act, moreover, in establishing a school without authority, was illegal by the canon law. A fierce storm rose around him. He was accused of arrogance, of heresy, of blasphemy, of profaning the truth of God by worldly science, and of setting philosophy above faith. It was affirmed that he gave to Grecian sages equal honor with Christian saints, admitted salvation for heathen philosophers, even questioned the mystery of the Trinity, and reasoned into abstract attributes the high persons

of the Godhead. The arm of the Church was bidden to crush this disciple of Plato, who taught another Gospel than that of the Fathers.

At first Abelard despised the clamor, and flung back the charges with vigorous sarcasms. He instanced the old fable of the fox and the grapes in reply to their abuse of his profane philosophy, challenged them to argue with him on the doctrines of faith, and plied them with reasons for what they called his heresies. But it soon appeared that he must apologize for, rather than defend, his views, and must do this before a tribunal new to him, and fatal to heretics from Arius downward,—a *Synod* of the Church. At Soissons,* noted already in the previous generation for the condemnation of Roscelin, he was called to stand before an imposing Council, gathered from the magnates of the French Church, and presided over by a papal legate, the Bishop Conon, a skilful hunter of heretics. In this city and before this assembly Abelard stood almost alone, conscious that the prejudices and passions of all around were combined to destroy him. The first charge against him was, that he “denied the Trinity.” He refuted this by proving from his writings that he had advocated the doctrine and sustained it by large use of the Fathers, of Origen, of Augustine, even of Athanasius, and by actual words of the Holy Scripture. They then reproached him that he had reasoned at all about the ineffable mystery; but he turned upon them with such a flood of ingenious eloquence, that many were captivated and some were converted. The majority of voices, nevertheless, condemned him, and at the closing session of the Council the solemn farce was ordered that he should burn his books and retract his errors. The Inquisition had not yet begun to burn the bodies of heretics. The scene as it is described has ludicrous features.

“While Abelard sadly looked upon his burning roll, the silence of the judges was suddenly broken, and one of the most hostile said, in an undertone, that he had somewhere read that God the Father alone was omnipotent. Amazed, the legate rejoined, ‘I cannot believe it. Every child knows that the universal faith of the Church declares that

* The populace of Soissons were extremely fanatical. A few years before, they had burned a man who was only suspected of Manicheism.

there are three omnipotent beings.' On this, a scholastic teacher, Thierry by name, laughed, and repeated in a loud whisper the words of the Athanasian Creed, 'And yet there are not three omnipotent beings, but only one.' Reproached for this untimely and irreverent remark, he boldly paraphrased the words of Daniel in the Apocryphal story: 'Thus, foolish sons of Israel, without examination or knowledge of the truth, ye have condemned one of your own brethren. Return again to the place of judgment and condemn the judge, whose own mouth has condemned him.' Then the Archbishop, rising, justified, as well as he could, in other language, the legate's idea, and endeavored to show, that, as the Father, Son, and Spirit were all omnipotent, whoever departed from this position ought not to be listened to. But *if 'the brother' admitted this*, he might explain his faith in their presence, so that it could be finally pronounced what portion was true and what portion false. At this apparent change of affairs Abelard took hope and courage. He thought of St. Paul before the Areopagus and the Jewish Council. If he could only speak, all might be saved. His enemies saw his plan, promptly parried it, cried out that all that he needed to do was to recite the Athanasian Creed, and, to forestall his plea that he did not know it by heart, thrust a copy of it before his eyes. His head sank, he sighed, and in broken accents read what he could." — Vol. I. p. 93.

Condemned to imprisonment as a heretic, Abelard was sent first to the sacred convent of St. Medard, one of the richest, most orderly, and most respected of the French religious foundations.* His short residence here was embittered by thoughts of the depth of his downfall, and by the disputes which he was compelled to hold with a former vanquished rival in the school of Paris, who now, as Prior of the Convent, undertook to "tame down the rhinoceros"; using sometimes the argument of logic, and sometimes that of the scourge, to which the helpless prisoner was forced to submit. Public clamor, which did not justify the sentence of the Council, soon released Abelard from his imprisonment at St. Medard, and brought him back to St. Denis, to quarrel again with the monks about questions of scholarship and practices of morality. His gravest sin was in affirming, on the authority of the venerable Bede, that Dionysius the Areopagite,

* This convent was remarkable as the burial-place of several of the old Gallic kings. The crypt still remains, but above it has been built a large asylum for the deaf and dumb, a conspicuous object on the bank of the river Aisne.

their cherished St. Denis, was bishop of Corinth, and not of Athens.*

He was now allowed to try the experiment of a hermit life, which he had before vainly longed for. On the borders of a tributary of the Seine, about ninety miles from Paris, in a wild region, fertile, but unfrequented, the counterpart to the valley of Clairvaux, he chose his place of retreat, built a little hut of straw and reeds, and dedicated it to the Trinity, hoping to pass the rest of his troubled life far from the haunts of men.† If this were his real hope, it was doomed to swift disappointment. The people could not so readily forget their hero. His cell was soon discovered, and surrounded by huts of innumerable scholars, some even pitching tents that they might follow him more easily if he should attempt to change his retreat, and all content to lie on the bare ground and live on the rudest fare, if they might so listen to the unsurpassed teacher. This turn in his fortune did not much distress the recluse, but rather revived his old proud joy. It was St. Jerome's life renewed, — priests and scholars coming to learn of the poor hermit and to hear his mandates. His frail oratory soon became a substantial structure of wood and stone, built, furnished, and adorned by the hands of disciples. The name by which this oratory is known in history (and few of its kind have been more widely known) is that of Paraclete, or Comforter; for here the sufferer had been consoled in his sorrows, and had learned how reason may conquer the trials of body and mind, and wisdom be justified in her children. To attest his orthodoxy, he caused to be set up on the altar of the oratory a symbolic group, representing the Trinity, — three figures carved from a single block of stone, each with its appropriate costume and inscription. This remarkable group remained entire for nearly seven hundred years, and was destroyed only in the excesses of the first French Revolution. ‡

* The honor of St. Denis of Athens is now shared by a new St. Denis, the Archbishop of Paris, who fell in the insurrection of 1848. Their figures are set opposite to each other on the painted windows of the church of St. Roch.

† Petrarch, in his essay on "A Life of Solitude," cites Abelard as the most illustrious modern instance.

‡ The group was composed of three figures set back to back, the Father in the

The retreat of the Paraclete recalled now the monasteries of the Thebaid, with this difference, that study rather than prayer was its ruling purpose. The discipline was novel, as the rules were few, quite unlike both discipline and rules in the convent of Bernard. The hardest penalty for irregular conduct was to be deprived of the master's lessons, and some curious instances are told of the pain which this privation caused. Abelard was a lenient censor, and more ready to forgive practical sins than to pass by intellectual errors. Men went to Clairvaux to learn obedience and to practise self-denial. They went to Paraclete to learn philosophy, and the principle of spiritual triumph over fleshly appetite. Truth was more than discipline here, study more than penance and fasting, the class more than the cell. Bernard taught his disciples how to conform, Abelard taught his disciples how to inquire; the one guided them backward through practice into faith, the other forward through faith into practice. The fame of this new kind of convent was noised abroad, and came to the ears of that man who now had reached the foremost position in the Church, and was by common consent set as dictator of doctrine and duty to all the faithful. Paraclete and Clairvaux were not very far apart, scarcely fifty miles, and their differing systems soon brought their differing leaders into strong antagonism. Abelard had been in strife with many famous doctors, but never yet had been matched with such a giant as the monk Bernard.

The famous champion of the established faith and order was still young in years; but his crowded labors, restless zeal, and signal austerities, had given him the renown of a

middle, clothed in a long gown, a stole hanging from his neck, crossed upon his breast, and fastened to his girdle, a mantle upon his shoulders, which reached to each of the others, from the clasp of which hung a gilded band, on which were the words, "*Filius meus es tu.*" On the right of the Father, the Son, in a similar robe, but without a girdle, held in his hands a cross resting on his breast, and on the left a band with the words, "*Pater meus es tu.*" The figure of the Holy Spirit had the hands crossed upon the breast, and bore the legend, "*Ego utriusque spiraculum.*" All wore crowns, the Holy Spirit a crown of olive, the Son a crown of thorns, and the Father a solid crown. In the Father's hand was the globe, the sign of supreme power. He alone had covered feet. The design of the group was superior to the mechanical execution.

“father” in the Church. No heresy could escape his sleepless searching. The epithet “Watch-dog of the Faith” he deserved and justified. Long before he had met Abelard in person, he had resolved to silence this daring thinker. He had waited only to gain a firm authority, that the warfare which should be ventured against the master of all knowledge might not fail of success. Abelard, too, had cherished a secret fear of one who seemed to be helped in his undertakings by superhuman power. To the exciting desire of conflict with such an enemy was opposed a troublesome doubt of its issue. What if Hector, defiant of all other foes and rivals, should be the victim of this invulnerable Achilles? Reports from time to time came of an impending blow, which this terrible scourger of heretics was preparing for him. His suspicions fastened to every provincial synod of the region some plot for his destruction. The suspense became intolerable to him; his lessons lost their interest; it seemed as if all the forces of the world and the Church were in league against him. He began to meditate how he should escape altogether from Catholic lands, and go to live among the heathen as a missionary of Christ. There, if he might not find charity, he might at least live unknown and be forgotten. A fortunate chance seemed for the time to relieve his anxiety, and to postpone the conflict which he dreaded. He knew the monk of Clairvaux too well to believe that his suspicion, once awakened, could be lulled. But he hoped by change of scene and work to avert the danger.

On a desolate cliff of the bay of Morbihan,* in the province of Lower Brittany, are still to be seen the ruins of the abbey of St. Gildas de Ruys. In the year 1125, this convent was already of high antiquity, and had among the foundations of France an honorable rank. To be the head of such a house, and successor of such a line of priors, reaching back over six centuries of history, was a distinction which even Abelard might covet. This position was offered to him. He was too glad of an asylum to hesitate long. Discharged by the con-

* This, one of the least frequented localities of France, is remarkable for the number and interest of its historical monuments. The Celtic stones of Carnac are the most wonderful of all existing Druidical remains.

vent of St. Denis, he entered with zeal upon his new duties, which were not likely to be either pleasant or easy. The customs of the monks were not congenial to the tastes of a scholar, nor were their morals tolerable to his austere decorum. Their language was barbarous, their behavior wild and reckless, and they were impatient of all restraint. Oppressed by the exactions of a feudal robber lord who dwelt in the neighborhood, they consoled themselves for paying one half of their revenue in tribute, by spending the other half in debauchery. Abelard soon found that his scholastic lore was worth nothing in the management of such a gross and unlettered company. His teachings they would not hear, his discipline they despised. Without the walls was danger, within was discouragement. Melancholy now took the place of his former anxiety. The influences of nature in that lonely region helped to make him sad and thoughtful. He felt profoundly that sense of desolation which Chateaubriand has described in his romantic memoirs. His days were spent in brooding reverie, in sorrowful review of his past misfortunes, in fruitless repining over his errors. The elegiac verses which record these sorrows of his heart are not the least unworthy monument of his fame.

While he was abandoning himself to this luxury of grief, listening to the monotonous plash of waves upon the rocks, which he translated into upbraidings of Heaven upon his folly, vexing himself with fruitless remorse that he had left Paraclete for this dismal exile, he was again restored to better duties and a happier experience, and enabled to do tardy justice to one whom he knew that he had wronged. Heloise had now become a recluse, eminent for wisdom, purity, and sanctity. A reform in the nunneries of France had driven her, with her companions, from their home at Argenteuil.* Abelard took the opportunity of making over to her his property at Paraclete, the oratory, the woods, the neighboring hamlet, and the fruit-bearing orchards. The gift was solemnly ratified by the Pope, and in the year 1126 Heloise became the

* The nuns of Argenteuil were not all like their abbess, and her experience there bore some resemblance to that of Abelard at St. Gildas.

first abbess in that long line of noble ladies, the last of whom died within the memory of living men.

The correspondence between Abelard and Heloise, long interrupted, was now resumed. Few literary remains of the Middle Age are more curious than these remarkable letters. They are still models of a chaste, ardent, and dignified epistolary style. There are in them at once a warmth and a reserve which show enduring attachment tempered by profound remorse. They are the letters of a spiritual adviser and a trustful pupil; of high religious friendship, and yet, at least on the side of Heloise, having the glow of a deep tenderness. They are the letters of love regenerated, of love sublimed by sorrow. Great as is the variety of topics, yet their highest interest is in the personalities of the writers. If Heloise asks the wise Abbot to advise her on some point of convent management, it is yet clear that she cares more for him who answers than for the answer which he gives. If Abelard rehearses some passage of his former fortunes, it is evident that he loves best to remember the season when Heloise was his pupil. He rejoices to come down from the dignified position of spiritual guide, to praise the grace and virtue of this pure servant of God. She is an exception to all women. She has changed the curse of Eve to the blessing of Mary. Her name,* unconsciously borrowed from the "Elohim," is prophetic of her divine loveliness. For him is justly the cross, but for her as fitly the crown. Even in forbidding her to write to him as belonging to him, Abelard loves to write of her while he writes to her.

We must not suppose, however, that the more modern versions of the letters of Abelard and Heloise are a fair representation of the tone of their language and sentiment. Neither the light brilliancy of Bussy Rabutin, nor the sentimental verse of Colardeau,† nor the stately and polished rhythm of Pope, gives an adequate idea of the simple elegance of these

* The name Heloise is really the same as Louisa.

† Colardeau was one of the most brilliant and versatile writers of the last century, — a poet of extraordinary wit, and singular faculty of imitation. He reproduced in France the style of Tasso, of Pope, and of Young, with equal facility. He died in 1776.

Latin epistles of the twelfth century. The legendary history of the affection of these lovers has added to their correspondence many things which were never written, and changed many common expressions into the language of passion. A comparison of manuscripts existing in the libraries of France and Italy with the cheap translations sold on the quays of Paris, shows that the story of Abelard and Heloise has fared in its passage through the ages like the stories of wonder-working saints. The sentimental chapter of Chateaubriand is hardly justified by what these lovers really wrote.*

With the renewal of their correspondence their acquaintance was renewed. Abelard became the visitor of the convent at Paraclete, and its spiritual director. It was a delightful relief from the harsh associations and duties of his own abbey to witness the pious austerities, the exemplary labors and prayers, of these holy sisters. It was cheering to see how earnest they were in imitation of her who walked before them an example of every Christian grace. To the nuns Abelard seemed a father in God. They waited reverently for his word; they used the liturgy which he wrote for them; and his ingenious discourse about some theological question often charmed their hours away. Daily, as his interest in the new religious house increased, the contrast of his own rude and riotous home became more repulsive. His efforts for reform were met with plots against his life, and more than once he narrowly escaped death by poison. Even the last resort of excommunication did not secure him, and his own brethren were ready to violate their solemn oath, if they might so rid themselves of his presence. Before he obtained a final release from his monastic duties, he had become an exile from his convent, and a guest in the house of a lord of the country. Here he composed that history of his misfortunes (*Historia Calamitatum*), which, midway in time between the Confessions of Augustine and of Rousseau, unites the mystic piety of the one to the morbid philosophy of the other. It is a tale of weaknesses, sufferings, and sins, — an outpouring of sentimental miseries.

* Genie du Christianisme, Part II. Book III. Chap. V.

A short season of quiet, though not of idleness, followed Abelard's release from the convent of St. Gildas. He tasted now the joys of friendship, and was comforted in finding that not all the noble were ungrateful, or unmindful of genius. One book after another came from his busy pen, and his systems of theology and philosophy, reviewed with care, took their final shape and fashion. He seemed to be happy, and could hope that his enemies had ceased to watch for his frailties and heresies. But the old ambition of the scholar was only smothered, not quenched. It was easy to persuade him to venture again into the arena of letters, and renew the glory of his youth. In the year 1136, at the age of fifty-seven, he astonished the world by opening his school on Mount St. Geneviève, the scene of his earliest triumph. The surprise was followed by a success as sudden. Students flocked from all directions to hear the gray-haired sage whose fame their fathers had rehearsed. A new generation came to listen to the Nestor of philosophy. An English prelate* has told of the enthusiasm with which he assisted in these lessons of the "Peripatetic Paladin," as he calls Abelard.

More than eleven years had now passed since first Abelard began to tremble beneath that terrible eye which seemed to be fastened upon him from out the gloom of the ancient Church. For a time he had seemed to escape it; but he was soon made conscious that it was still upon him. In this interval, he had once met with Bernard, on the occasion of a proselyting journey of the Pope through France. The confident bearing of Abelard at that time, and his apparent indifference to the person of the Father of Christendom, left an unfavorable impression upon the suspicious guardian of the honor of St Peter. At a subsequent visit to Paraclete, Bernard had noticed a change in the words of the Lord's Prayer, which he learned with indignation had been suggested by Abelard. His feeling, openly expressed, was of course not long in reaching the ears of the friend of Heloise, and a quarrel arose, in which sarcasm only provoked zeal to bitterness. Bernard had the advantage of position, and had also the ad-

* John of Salisbury, afterwards Bishop of Chartres, himself a "peripatetic" scholar.

vantage in temper and cunning. He was willing to relent and be reconciled, if Abelard would yield all the points of his heresy. In this, as in every similar difficulty, the conservative could be satisfied only by the reformer's thorough submission; the concessions must be all on one side. Abelard was ready to meet his adversary half-way, but found soon that Bernard was not a man to make or accept compromises. Their warfare in a little time became a warfare of parties, a public concern. A throng of followers applauded the eloquent invectives of the monk of Clairvaux, denouncing the vengeance of Heaven on the perfidious dogmatizer. A strong band of friends could sympathize with the contempt which the fearless teacher expressed for one who was a foe to freedom. On one side were piety and numbers, on the other genius and enthusiasm. A crowded majority cheered on Bernard to crush the heretic who dared to neglect and improve upon "the Fathers"; a noble minority stood ready to help Abelard in his defence of philosophy, in his apology for liberty. But the contest was unequal, and Abelard soon saw that the best argument was no match for adroit management, backed by religious bigotry. Four centuries yet must pass before reason could justify itself in the ways of the world against authority. He had no alternative but to dare his enemy to a public trial.

The reigning king of France at this time, Louis VII., a devout lover of religious spectacles, had decreed for the octave of Pentecost in the year 1140 a special season for the adoration of the numerous and precious relics in the metropolitan church at Sens, a city some fifteen leagues south of Paris. This city, the Canterbury of France, and destined a few years later to be associated more nearly with the Canterbury of England, through the fame of Thomas à Becket, which each still continues to claim,* and this occasion, which the presence of royalty, of so many nobles of the court, so many dignitaries of the Church, and such a concourse of the people was likely to make brilliant in the highest degree, were chosen by Abelard for the scene of his public controversy. He asked that this splendid gathering should become a council to hear his defence of the

* Among the treasures of the cathedral are the ecclesiastical robes of Becket, and the altar at which he ministered remains.

faith and his personal vindication. The zealots of his party, at the head of whom, perhaps, was the famous Arnold of Brescia,* a fugitive from persecution in Italy, urged him on with their rash persuasions. Bernard was not quite at ease; for he had some differences with the bishops around Paris which prejudiced his cause. He went to work at once, however, with shrewdness and energy, to create an opinion in his own favor, and to pack the council with his own friends, wrote letters in all directions, had his emissaries busy with the doubtful, and consented even to meet in person the arch-heretic on the field of his trial. The pious sentences of the Psalmist and the Saviour, which he went up to Sens humbly repeating, seem more suitable to the case of his adversary than to his own. It was for the accused rather than the accuser to say, "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."

Few notices of this important Council have come down to us. We learn its doings from the report of Bernard's party, and not from official documents. If we may believe these, Abelard's whole demeanor justified the sentence which had been previously determined. The saint, they say, walked with downcast eyes, with sad countenance, coarsely clad, dispensing benedictions to the kneeling crowds, who saw heavenly meekness and love in his humility. The heretic, unbroken by suffering, marched with head erect, with haughty mien, frightening by his majestic glance those who dared to gaze curiously at him. Even the magnificent ceremonies of the first day, given up to processions and music and panegyric upon the martyrs, skilfully contrived to dazzle the multitude and fasten them to the splendid ritual of the Church, were less remarkable than the contrast between these two great men, which forced itself upon the eyes of all the spectators. And on the second day, the day of trial, it was evident enough that Abelard stood before his rival as a condemned criminal before his prosecutor. Solemnly, in the great church of St. Stephen, around the king on his throne, the princes and prelates, priests and scholars,—the crowd behind filling all the aisles,—waited

* Arnold of Brescia is one of those early reformers to whom history has never done justice. He was the Luther of the twelfth century.

almost breathlessly for the heretic to appear. He passed on toward the altar, but stopped midway, as he saw in the pulpit before him Bernard holding in his hand the guilty volumes. Seventeen heretical doctrines had been selected by the keen accuser. The attending clerk began in a loud voice to read them. Suddenly Abelard bade him desist, protested angrily that he would hear no further, that he "appealed to the Pope," and disappeared from the assembly. Whether it was by design, or from a sudden impulse of fear, that Abelard thus acted, we have no means of knowing. It is likely that he had resolved beforehand, if, like Paul at Jerusalem, he should find no hope of justice from his own people, to carry his appeal at last to Rome.

The Council at first were in consternation. Should they go on and sentence one who had transferred his cause to the higher tribunal? Could they anticipate the judgment of the Lateran? Many doubted, some feared; but Bernard overruled all scruples by pleading the disgrace of thus leaving the victory to the heretic. On the following days the various counts were taken up, discussed, and finally condemned, to the number of fourteen. It was decreed, on the ground of garbled extracts and forced constructions, that the accused had taught heresy, in denying, like Sabellius, the doctrine of a Trinity of persons; in denying, like Nestorius, that the Christ is a person of the Trinity; in denying, like Pelagius, the doctrine of special saving grace; in asserting that Jesus saves by his example and his life more than by his vicarious sacrifice; in asserting that God cannot prevent evil; and in teaching that sin is rather in the will than in the acts of men, and that ignorance is not sin. The discussions were not violent, nor was any penalty pronounced against the offender. There was no *Te Deum* sung when the laudable task was finished. Yet Bernard aimed here a blow which should destroy the influence of his foe, and make it impossible for him to regain in the Church the rank of a master. He had yet to deal with the pending appeal to Rome, and with the apologies for Abelard, which were not few nor contemptible. The sentence of the Council might satisfy the bishops, but it could not silence the scholars of the Church.

Abelard had many friends at Rome. An eminent Cardinal of the Sacred College, who, four years later, became Celestine II., was his steadfast defender. The scholars might be expected to favor his cause. But the flatteries, the persuasions, the warnings, the persistent entreaties, the magical authority of the monk of Clairvaux, were greater at Rome than all the influences which supported the cause of his rival. In vain Heloise could show the sound and orthodox confession which her friend had prepared for her use. In vain a young student * could smite with his sarcasms the solid fame of the guardian of orthodoxy, and show that Bernard more even than Abelard was false to Scripture and to truth, — could ridicule the Council as an assembly of stupid sots, and their leader as a malicious plotter. Bernard took care that the Pope should so decide that the unity of the Church should stand, and an undivided front be shown against this, as against every heresy. A double mandate came from the Papal palace; — one order, forbidding Abelard to teach in public, and another secret order, condemning his books to be burned, and commanding his imprisonment. In this last order, Arnold of Brescia was joined.

Before this decision was made known in France, Abelard had commenced his journey to Rome. It had for him all the toil, with none of the joy, of a pilgrimage. A few days of travel brought him to that famous monastery of the Benedictines, the ruins of which still invite the voyager off from his beaten track. Cluny had been for two centuries the home of learning, the refuge of misfortune, the nursery of temperate piety. Its present Abbot, Peter the Venerable, was a father in the Church beloved for his virtues, respected for his scholarship, and everywhere praised for his serene and pacific charity.† The brotherhood of Cluny, under his control, were not severe ascetics, and their Abbot was no friend to the rigid Bernard. Here Abelard stopped for some days to rest, and here first learned that public decision of Rome concerning his heresy which made his farther journey needless. It required no long argu-

* Peter Berenger, the namesake and pupil of Abelard, whose brilliant defence of his teacher excited the admiration of Europe, became afterwards one of the most bitter foes of the great philosopher.

† The noble remark of Peter in his letter to Bernard is, "The rule of St. Benedict is subordinate to the rule of charity."

ment to reconcile the weary and desponding sufferer to his inevitable fate. Cluny was not so much his prison as his happy retreat, where he might now finish the remnant of his checkered and broken career. Waiving his rank as an abbot, and dismissing his pride of philosophy, he enrolled himself with the brethren of the convent, gave himself to the quiet routine of a cloistral life, and humbled himself to the place of a servant. They began to celebrate Abelard's piety,—to tell how the former heretic was now a saint, and the once proud scholar was a model of the Christian beatitudes. To the eyes of his brethren he seemed to have died to all fleshly lusts, to all worldly ambition. Bernard had already been satisfied by the new confession of faith which misfortune had extorted, and the good Abbot Peter was now edified by the spectacle of a converted and experienced Christian. How delusive these appearances were, the great work of Abelard on the Scholastic Philosophy, to which he here gave the finishing touches, proves. In his self-communing, the unconquerable pride still breaks forth; he defies the envious world, asserts the truth of his lessons, predicts that the future will avenge his fame and recognize his power. The victim, uncrowned and defeated, will be lifted hereafter to his rightful place, and the world shall in him know the vindicator of science and the prophet of freedom. His age has ungratefully rejected him, but humanity shall accept and honor him.*

A few months of struggle with disease and pain were yet left to him. He spent them in constant literary labor. Friends waited to write from his dictation, and to hear the fragments of his wisdom. For better air, he was sent to the priory of St. Marcellus, where they vainly hoped that his waning force might be revived. His death, which took place here, on the 21st of April, 1142, was tranquil, and seemed triumphant. We need not follow the fortune of his relics, the history of which is not a little curious, or tell of the sentimental letters which passed between the Abbot of Cluny and the Abbess of Paraclete, or of the miracles observed when the

* It has been more than once remarked, that, though Abelard seemed to have retracted his heresies, yet no one of the offensive opinions or passages was expurgated from his writings. His secret reservation anticipated the "*e pur si muove*" of Galileo.

tomb from time to time has been opened. After many changes, the translations of piety and the fury of revolutions, the remains of the philosopher and of her who shared his truest affection rest where the great and the wise and the holy of the land are laid down together.

Abelard's character is made up of contrasts, and is not easy to be analyzed. He was a man to win respect and kindle enthusiasm, but not one to be deeply loved, or thoroughly understood. His friends were fascinated by his genius more than they were drawn by his kindliness. In him the gifts of mind towered so high above the graces of heart, that his affections, if true and tender, had no chance to prove themselves so. That he was a leader by natural right, all allowed. That he was ambitious, arrogant, and haughty, men forgot in the splendor of his intellectual daring. He vindicated his conceit by his marvellous achievements. His thirst for knowledge was the compensation for his lack of reverence, and his diligent searching was the complement of his defective prayer. Men saw that he who reasoned about mysteries was not a scoffing iconoclast, but a steadfast student of wisdom. Men knew that he who claimed to dictate was constant to hear the truth above him. If they beheld him sometimes timid before men, they saw him always brave before opinions. He was intellectually the boldest of men. He knew no proper bound to investigation, no just hinderance to inquiry. There was no dogma too sacred to be tried by his reason, no theme too high to be brought into his discussion.

Like all innovators, Abelard was arbitrary and impatient of contradiction. Prudence of thought or word or action was not a virtue with him. He could command, but he could not manage, his followers. While his scrutiny was close, so that no abuse escaped his eye, he wanted tact to deal with abuses, and could only expose, but not correct them. With a critical intellect, he had not practical skill, — not even skill to hide his own defects of temper. His enemies believed that he was jealous, his friends mourned that he was heedless. Ready for any enterprise, he was unequal to any crisis. Love of command made him intolerant of all rivalry, and love of renown led him into needless quarrels; yet none could accuse him of

the meaner forms of selfishness, — of avarice, cunning, or vindictiveness. He might be insolent, but he was not malicious. His anger might be easily aroused, but hatred did not find place in his heart. They called him fickle, in his frequent changes from the school to the cloister, and the cloister to the school. The last impression of his life, on the contrary, is that of a steady and loyal devotion to learning and philosophy, which the most severe calamities could not break.

His industry was extraordinary. It did not, indeed, show itself in such voluminous writings as those of the Schoolmen, who were later interpreters of the new science which Abelard announced, but rather in the study of the Greek philosophers and the Christian Fathers. His works all together make but a single quarto, while many folios are the marvellous monument of some who were formed by his influence. Abelard was rather a reader and a critic, than the expositor of a new theory. His labor was rather in arranging the materials for controversy, than in recording its results and fruits. His method of teaching was to cite, to review, to discuss what earlier writers had maintained, and then to give with brevity his own decision. His books are therefore more like judgments than like treatises, — fragmentary opinions rather than a digested system.

Abelard was the founder, though not the organizer, of a new school both in philosophy and theology. The method and the direction which learning took in the subsequent age were his in the beginning. The great teachers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were virtually his pupils. The "Master of Sentences" was wont to say that Abelard's "*Sic et Non*" was his breviary. Even those who opposed his theories confessed their indebtedness to him. The Realists made use of the arms which the first champion of the Nominalists furnished. It was the crime of Abelard that he reconciled the Gospel with Aristotle, and converted heathen maxims into Christian dogmas. But in the next century, that great light of the Catholic Church, whose works are still the text-book of faith to all the brotherhood of Rome, St. Thomas Aquinas, proved, as a strict follower of him who taught in Paris before, that Aristotle was orthodox; — and all the people said, Amen!

Not much can be said in praise of the style of Abelard's philosophical writings. It is as good as the style of his age, but that was hard, dry, unadorned, and uninspired. The thought is exact enough, but the words are abstract and the sentences obscure in their prolixity. It needed his voice and manner to make his ideas attractive. He wrote at a time when the Latin tongue had reached the climax of ruggedness and corruption. Except in his correspondence, and in a few passages of his *Historia Calamitatum*, we look in vain for that nervous brilliancy which marks the pleading of Jerome of Bethlehem, or that graceful elegance which brings Erasmus of Rotterdam close to the golden age of Roman letters. To both these remarkable men he bears resemblance, as well in the points of his character as in the circumstances of his life. The same pedantry, vanity, and arrogance, the same consciousness of power, the same dread of persecution, which we have marked in him, we find in them as strikingly exemplified. As a scholar he was hardly their inferior. But as a writer he must yield to them the palm.

A candid examination of his writings will not justify the stigma of heresy which was fastened to the name of Abelard. On the contrary, his opinions are quite as orthodox as the necessities of sainthood require. It is his spirit, and not his dogma, which is heretical. His crime was that he would be a prophet, and not a priest; that he made men think, when he should have made them worship. He might be loyal, yet his influence was dangerous. Bernard could see latent heresy and the promise of a rebellion, even where the present conclusion accorded with established formulas. The *discussion itself*, not merely its issue, was sinful. The genius of the teacher was revolutionary, though its work might not be perfected in many ages. Abelard's condemnation was the beginning of that warfare of the Church with rationalism, the end of which is not yet. It was the opening of that sharp controversy of reason with authority, of learning with faith, which has separated for the modern Church what the tendencies of the ancient Church would have happily joined. It marks the time when the Church distinctly announces itself as the enemy of freedom, in thought not less than in action. The sentence

of Abelard is the complement to the submission of Henry of Germany. Science, as well as the state, must now bend to the ecclesiastic sway. The school, with the court, must consent to be an appendage to the altar and the cloister. Nay, the cloister itself must lose its scholastic glories, and must limit hereafter its studies to the measure of its symbols and its prayers. The renown of the old Benedictines shall wane before the zeal of the followers of St. Dominic, and before the austerities of the brethren of St. Francis. The preachers and the friars shall silence the scholars and vex the colleges. Abelard, though not himself a martyr like those whom the Inquisition murdered, was the pioneer of the noblest martyrs, the martyrs of knowledge and light and liberty. His sentence prophesied the scattering of Wickliffe's ashes, the burning of Huss on the plain of Constance, the awful day of St. Bartholomew, the exile of Grotius, and the prison of Galileo, as much as his teaching prophesied the philosophy of Pascal, of Descartes, and of Francis Bacon.

Abelard's life had not, it may seem to us, an heroic close. He died, they say, humiliated and repentant, undoing that work of reform which at best he had only half completed. But, with all his reverses, he had a nobler hope than Bernard with all his successes. The busy guardian of the Church could see only trouble for the flock of Christ, when his strong arm should fall from its defence, — only fear and danger in the future. The philosophic scholar could find consolation in the assurance that disciples had not forgotten the word of their master, and that the truth which he had declared would not die with him. The sadness of Bernard was all in the prospect; the sadness of Abelard was all in the retrospect. The present victory of the one was darkened by the shadow of coming heresies and growing scandals; the present defeat of the other was brightened by the confidence that the emancipation of thought was near to its dawning. He might be weak; he might be forsaken. But he knew that the encounter of truth with falsehood should come; that champions should arise for her; that the Almighty was on her side; that now she might be bound, but the bonds could not hold for ever; that against policies and stratagems and licensings of the Church her word should

stand and her triumph be sealed. The victories of science in this latter day are proving, even more than the homage of a nation at his tomb, how wise was the hope of the defeated scholar, how much wiser than the anathemas of the zealot of the twelfth century. The majestic periods of the Areopagitica of Milton are the expression of the sufficient comfort of Abelard's last years.

We cannot better close this imperfect sketch than by translating a passage from M. Cousin's Introduction to the unpublished works of Abelard, in which with admirable precision he states the philosophic position and influence of this philosopher and scholar.

"A hero of romance in the Church, a man of refinement in a barbarous age, a chief of a school, and almost a martyr for opinion's sake, everything united to make of Abelard an extraordinary person. But of all his claims, that which gives him a special place in the history of the human soul is the invention of a new philosophical system, and the application of this system, and, in general, of philosophy, to theology. Doubtless we can find, before Abelard, some rare examples of such an application, perilous, but useful, even in its fragments, to the progress of reason. But it was Abelard that erected it into a *principle*; and it was he, therefore, who most contributed to found scholasticism; for scholasticism is nothing else than this. From the time of Charlemagne, and even before, in many places a little grammar and logic were taught, and religious teaching was not lacking; but this teaching was limited to a more or less regular exposition of the sacred dogmas; it was enough for faith, but did not fructify the understanding. Only the introduction of dialectics into theology could arouse that controversial spirit, which is at once the vice and the glory of scholasticism. Abelard is the principal author of this introduction; he is therefore the chief founder of mediæval philosophy; so that France has furnished to Europe both the scholasticism of the twelfth century by Abelard, and in Descartes at the beginning of the seventeenth century the destroyer of this very scholasticism and the father of modern philosophy. In this there is no inconsistency; for the same spirit which had raised ordinary religious teaching to the systematic and rational form which is called scholasticism, could readily go further, and produce philosophy properly so called. The same land has fitly produced at some ages of distance apart Abelard and Descartes; and between these two men we may remark, along with many differences, a striking resemblance. Abelard endeavored to make himself fully conversant with the only thing that in his age could be studied, — *theology*; Descartes investigated what in his age might

best be studied, — *man and nature*. The latter recognized no authority but reason; while the former undertook to carry reason over into authority. Both doubt, both examine, both wish to understand all that they can, and to be satisfied only by evidence, — a common temper which they borrow from the French mind, and a fundamental trait which brings with it many minor marks of resemblance; for instance, that clearness of speech which comes spontaneously from clearness and precision of ideas. Add to this, that Abelard and Descartes are not only Frenchmen, but that they belong to the same province, to that Brittany whose people are distinguished by so quick a sentiment of freedom and such strong personality. Hence, in these two illustrious compatriots, with their natural originality, with their disposition to admire but moderately what had been done before them and what was doing in their own time, we find independence pushed often to the quarrelsome spirit, confidence in their own strength and contempt of their adversaries, more consistency than weight in their opinions, more sagacity than breadth, more vigor in the stamp of mind and temper than elevation and profoundness in thought, more ingenuity than common sense. In fine, they are fruitful in their own notions rather than lifted to universal reason, obstinate, venturesome, radical, revolutionary.”

ART. VI. — *The History and Antiquities of Boston, and the Villages of Skirbeck, Fishtoft, Freiston, Butterwick, Benington, Leverton, Leake, and Wrangle; comprising the Hundred of Skirbeck, in the County of Lincoln. Including also a History of the East, West, and Wildmore Fens, and Copious Notices of the Holland or Haut-Huntre Fen; a History of the River Witham; the Biography of celebrated Persons, Natives of, or connected with, the Neighborhood; Sketches of the Geology, Natural History, Botany, and Agriculture of the District; a very extensive Collection of Archaisms and Provincial Words, Local Dialect, Phrases, Proverbs, Omens, Superstitions, etc.* By PISHEY THOMPSON. Illustrated with one hundred Engravings. Boston: John Noble, Jr. 1856. 8vo. pp. 824.

WE have had much to say in our pages about the value, the charm, the richness of local histories, the claims of their authors to lasting and growing gratitude, and their essential